THE COILS BELOW

An AD&D 2nd Edition Encounter for the Amedio Sandbox Campaign by Falln

Location: Azure District – East Market

Time: Early evening, just before closing. Some stalls are still active; a few merchants are packing up.

SETUP

As the PCs pass through the East Market near sundown, they hear shouts of alarm and see sparks crackling in the air.

"Watch out! They're loose again!"

A large cage on a merchant's cart has burst open, releasing two shocker lizards meant for export. A rival animal handler, disguised as a curious bystander, sabotaged the cage to embarrass or ruin his competitor.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

- A few late-working vendors are still around, screaming and running from the lizards.
- The lizards are panicked, their crackling discharges frightening nearby horses and knocking over crates.
- The sabotage was done by a rival animal seller, posing as an innocent onlooker. He's sticking around just long enough to ensure his sabotage succeeded—unless confronted.
- A pickpocket seizes the opportunity to grab some easy coins.
- **Azure Watch Arrival:** Arrives in 2d6 rounds, alerted by the lightning and shouting. If they arrive to chaos, they may detain or question the PCs unless order is restored quickly.

STATISTICS

Shocker Lizards (2): AC 6; MV 9; HD 2+1; hp 11, 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (shock); SA: Electric discharge (3d8 if both within 20 ft., save vs. spell for ½); AL N; XP 175 each; THAC0 19 **Notes:** Will attack

Small Viper (1): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 + poison; SA: Poison (save vs. poison or take +10 dmg over 2 turns); AL N; XP 65; THAC0 20 **Notes:** Will try to flee

Ruhann Jasko *(Animal Merchant, Human Commoner L0)*
AC 9 (padded robe); MV 12; HD 0; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (walking stick); AL NG; XP 15; THAC0 20
Stats: Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14
Notes: Elderly, kind merchant; owns the cage of exotic creatures. Deeply distraught over the chaos. Offers 100 gp reward for safe return of animals. Will defend them if needed, but not a trained combatant.

Vellin Dorn ***(Merchant in Disguise, Human Thief L2)*** AC 6 (leather armor under cloak + Dex); MV 12; HD 2; hp 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA: Thief skills; AL NE; XP 65; THAC0 20
Thief Skills: MS 35%, HS 30%, PP 20%, OL 25%, CW 60%, DN 20%
Stats: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 11
Notes: Competing animal merchant in disguise. Sabotaged Ruhann's animal cage to harm his reputation. Lurks among the crowd feigning concern. Flees if exposed.

Nalla Quickstep ***(Pickpocket, Human Thief L1)*** AC 7 (Dex only); MV 12; HD 1; hp 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA: Pick pockets; AL CN; XP 35; THAC0 20
Thief Skills: PP 45%, MS 20%, HS 25%, DN 15%, OL 10%
Stats: Str 9, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 12
Notes: Local street thief. When the lizards broke loose, Nalla used the distraction to grab coin purses and slip away. Not involved in the sabotage. Will flee and hide if noticed. May become a recurring nuisance.

Azure Watch Patrol Guards (1d6+1) AC 5 (chainmail + shield); MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 7 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword) or 1d4+1 (club); AL LN; XP 35; THAC0 19
Stats: Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Notes: Will attempt to restore order, possibly detaining those near the scene. Carry whistles to call reinforcements (another patrol arrives in 4d6 rounds if summoned). Favor merchants over outsiders unless given good reason.

Azure Watch Sergeant ***(optional, 1 in 3 chance with group)*** AC 4 (chainmail + Dex); MV 12; HD 2; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (longsword); AL LN; XP 65; THAC0 19
Stats: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 12
Notes: More authoritative. Will demand explanations and take charge of the situation if things escalate. May recognize PCs by reputation or past behavior.

CHECKS

- **Wisdom check:** Spot Vellin's disguise or unusual behavior.
  Success: You notice something off about his clothes or demeanor.
- **Intelligence check:** Examine the broken cage.
  Success: You determine it was sabotaged, not damaged accidentally.
- **Wisdom (Set Snares or Animal Handling proficiency):** Calm or coax the shocker lizards.
  Success: The lizard becomes passive or follows simple commands.
- **Pick Pockets (thief skill):** Detect Nalla Quickstep stealing.
  Success: You catch her in the act and may stop her escape.
- **Disguise (thief or proficiency):** Examine Vellin's face or clothes.
  Success: You recognize he's not who he claims to be.
- **Wisdom check:** Watch the crowd for suspicious movement.
  Success: You spot Vellin lurking too close or Nalla weaving between stalls.
- **Tracking (proficiency or ranger):** Follow animal or humanoid tracks.
  Success: You find the viper's trail or follow one of the suspects.
- **Charisma (reaction roll):** Interact with the Azure Watch.
  High roll: They trust and cooperate with you.
  Low roll: They grow suspicious and may detain you.

REWARDS AND OUTCOMES

- Ruhann offers **100 gp total** if both shocker lizards are returned alive.
- If **Vellin Dorn** is exposed or captured, the party gains +2 reaction modifier with Azure District animal vendors for one week.
- **Vellin's belongings** include a coded sales ledger and a silver-ringed signet of a minor smuggler faction — potentially a hook into future intrigue.
- If **Nalla Quickstep** is caught, she carries 3 stolen purses (worth 10 gp, 7 gp, and 2 gp) and a lucky rabbit's foot. If let go, she may become a recurring contact (or nuisance).
- If the **Azure Watch** is treated respectfully, they may issue the party an informal favor — e.g., delayed paperwork, overlooked permit issues, or early word of new postings.